

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 02520 040749Z

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 EUR-12 /034 W

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P 040606Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3461

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 2520

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IT ET US

SUBJECT: ITALIAN REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 046704

1. ITALIAN PRESENTATION CONTAINED PARA 1 REFTEL ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE. EMBASSY HAD BEEN ASKED TO TRANSPORT FOOD SUPPLIES FOR ITALIAN CONGEN ASMARA IN US MAAG/ETHIOPIA AIRCRAFT AND, ON SEPARATE OCCASION, TO TRANSPORT PERSON OF ITALIAN CONSUL GENERAL LONG BLOCKED HERE IN SAME AIRCRAFT FROM ADDIS TO ASMARA.

2. TO EMBASSY'S REGRET, IT HAD BEEN COMPELLED TO DECLINE TO PERFORM THESE SERVICES. REASONS ARE SIMPLY THAT USE OF MAAG AIRCRAFT ABSOLUTELY VITAL IN CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES FOR SUPPORT/ EVACUATION OF AMERICAN PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT IN ASMARA, NOT TO SPEAK OF PERFORMANCE CONTINUING MAAG MISSION. IT HAS TAKEN ENORMOUS EFFORT BY EMBASSY TO OBTAIN FROM MOD AGREEMENT FOR CLEARANCE OF MAAG AIRCRAFT TO PERFORM THESE MISSIONS MORE OR LESS ON REQUEST AND WITHOUT REFERENCE TO "DIRG." MOD'S WILLINGNESS CLEAR THESE FLIGHTS ON OWN RESPONSIBILITY, HOWEVER, STRICTLY CONTINGENT ON THEIR EXCLUSIVELY AMERICAN NATURE.

3. EMBASSY REASONED, AND ITALIAN COLLEAGUES HERE FULLY UNDERSTAND, THAT ONLY CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH WE COULD AFFORD TO COMPLY WITH ITALIAN REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE DESCRIBED ABOVE WAS THAT ETHIOPIAN AUTHORITIES WOULD PERCEIVE ABSOLUTELY NO OBJECTION - - I.E. THAT OUR WILLINGNESS HELP ITALIAN ALLIES WOULD NOT JEOPARDIZE
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PAGE 02 ADDIS 02520 040749Z

OUR CAPACITY USE MAAG AIRCRAFT TO SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE AND

PROGRAMS. HOWEVER, FACT THAT ITALIANS HAVE CONTINUED TO BE
BLOCKED BY ETHIOPIAN AUTHORITIES IN THEIR EFFORTS OBTAIN SPACE ON
EAL SHUTTLE FLIGHTS GOING TO ASMARA FOR THEIR SUPPLIES OR
THEIR PERSONNEL STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT IN FACT
IS RESISTING ITALIAN GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO SUPPORT ITS CONGEN
IN ASMARA AND TO RETURN ITS CONSUL GENERAL TO HIS POST.

4. THIS HAS, ACCORDINGLY, LED US TO THE CONCLUSION THAT, MUCH
AS WE REGRET IT, WE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT IN CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES
ACCEDE TO THESE ITALIAN REQUESTS.

5. DEPARTMENT SHOULD KNOW, MOREOVER, THAT SIMILAR REQUESTS HAVE
BEEN RECEIVED FROM OTHER FRIENDLY EMBASSIES.

6. WE DID RETURN TO ADDIS SEVERAL ITALIAN CONGEN POUCHES ON A
US-CHARTERED EAL AIRCRAFT FLYING FROM ASMARA TO ADDIS.

7. POSTSCRIPT: ITALIAN CONGEN AND SOME SUPPLIES DEPARTED ADDIS
FOR ASMARA THIS MORNING (MARCH 3), ACCORDING ITALIAN EMBASSY HERE.
WYMAN

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